



U.S. Department of Justice

**Terrence Berg
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Eastern District of Michigan**

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For Immediate Release:

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Nov 20, 2008

EVENT: Sentenced

Defendant: Rahib Al-Cholan

DETROIT MAN SENTENCED TO 9 1/2 YEARS FOR INTERSTATE SEX TRAVEL

Iraqi Army Veteran Drove To Toledo For Sex With 12-Year-Old For \$150

A Detroit man who drove to Toledo to have sex with a girl he believed to be 12-years-old for \$150 to be paid to her uncle was sentenced to 112 months imprisonment in federal court today, Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced. Berg was joined in the announcement by Brian M. Moskowitz, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Investigations in Detroit.

Rahib Al-Cholan, 46, was convicted after two hours of deliberation by a federal jury following a week-long trial in July before United States District Judge George Caram Steeh.

Law enforcement agents testified that Al-Cholan is an Iraqi army veteran who served in tank and artillery units in Baghdad and Basra from 1982 to 1991. He arrived in the United States as a refugee in 1995 and was granted citizenship in 2003.

In October 2007, Al-Cholan solicited an undercover ICE informant to provide a child for sex. Over the course of several days, Al-Cholan described a series of past sexual acts with children, including numerous acts of solicitation and molestation of children. His sentence

today included an enhancement for a pattern of prior sexual abuse against children.

Agents directed an informant to tell Al-Cholan that a 12-year-old child was being sold by her uncle for sex for \$150 out of a hotel in Toledo. The defendant drove to Toledo with the informant on November 7, 2007. When they arrived in Toledo, defendant paid an undercover agent posing as the girl's uncle and was given a room key. He was arrested entering the lobby of the hotel.

Acting United States Attorney Berg said, "The predatory conduct and dangerous history of this defendant merited a significant sentence that would remove him from society for a good period of time. Keeping such offenders off the streets and away from children is a key goal of Project Safe Childhood."

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Leonid Feller and Erin Shaw.